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AF releases most specialties from Stop-Loss

by Staff Sgt. A.J. Bosker, Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Air Force personnel officials announced June 21 the release of most Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSC) from Stop-Loss, a Defense Department program designed to retain members of the armed forces beyond established dates of separation or retirement.

This announcement comes as a result of the latest review of AFSCs by the major commands, Air Staff, Air Reserve Component (ARC), Secretariat and the Air Force Personnel Center, and applies across the board to both active duty and Air Reserve Component members, according to Lt. Col. Jan Middleton, chief of promotion, evaluation and separation policy at the Pentagon.

The officer career fields remaining on Stop-Loss restrictions are: 11S, 12S and 31P.

The enlisted career fields remaining on Stop-Loss restrictions are: 1A1X0, 1A1X1, 1C0X0, 1C0X1, 1C0X2, 1C1X0, 1C1X1, 1N0X0, 1N0X1, 1T2X0, 1T2X1, 2F0X0, 2F0X1, 3P0X0 and 3P0X1.

Middleton said Air Force members with an approved date of separation or retirement in those career fields approved for release are free to separate or retire almost immediately. Officials are developing guidance for the release of all personnel remaining on Stop-Loss, and expect to make the announcement to the field within the next couple of weeks, she said.

“Any released active duty or ARC member, not mobilized or deployed, with an approved expiration of term of service, date of separation or date of retirement may be allowed to separate or retire no earlier than July 1,” Middleton said.

Active duty and ARC members who are deployed in support of ongoing operations or are either voluntarily or involuntarily on active duty to support ongoing operations will not be released until they return from their deployments or they are demobilized.

“Since Stop-Loss was first implemented, the Air Force’s exit plans have called for a gradual drawdown of the number of affected AFSCs,” Middleton said. “We have tried to release as many AFSCs as possible after each review.”

Stop-Loss was not used as a manning tool, Middleton emphasized.

“The determining factor for an AFSC’s release was based upon the Air Force’s ability to maintain sufficient forces to meet ongoing mission requirements,” she said. “To accomplish this, we review current manning and authorizations, the number of people deployed for Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom, the number of Air Reserve Component people mobilized, and the overall health of the career fields.”

However, Stop-Loss waivers have been and still are available, and may be granted based on specific circumstances, she said.

“We understand that many people and their families have had to put their plans on hold since Stop-Loss was first implemented,” said Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche. “I just want everyone to know that the Air Force and this nation are grateful for your service and the sacrifices you have made to keep us safe from evil.” @